

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 001981

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/02/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [IZ](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: TFIZO1: 104 (LESS PROMINENT) JORDANIANS SIGN
SECOND LETTER SUPPORTING KING ABDULLAH'S ANTI-WAR EFFORTS

REF: AMMAN 1954

Classified By: PolCouns Doug Silliman for reasons 1.5 (B)(D)

DUELING LETTERS

1. (C) On April 2nd, Al Arab Al Yawm newspaper published a second letter addressed to King Abdullah. The letter contains one basic point -- the signatories support the King's handling of the war and his continuing efforts to stop the "aggression" against Iraq. The letter also praises the King's wise and brave leadership. The letter's signatories include both prominent and lesser known Jordanians, but the list generally lacks the luster of those who signed the March 31 letter (reftel). Among the signers are ex parliamentarians, a former speaker of the Lower House, businessmen and prominent tribal leaders. We note that, while this letter calls for efforts to stop the war, it does not mention the U.S. or UK.

IT'S ABOUT THE KING'S LEGITIMACY

2. (C) PolCouns spoke April 2 with Naif Mawla, former MP and signatory of the second letter. Mawla said that he had been shown the draft of the first letter, but -- although he opposes the war in Iraq -- had declined to associate himself with it because of its implied questioning of the King's legitimacy. After the publication of the first letter, Mawla said, he and several other pro-Hashemite politicians -- we suspect in cooperation with the Palace -- decided to draft a second letter to show their support for the King's stand. Mawla, at several points during the conversation, said he hoped that Jordan would be able to benefit economically in the new Iraq. No one will miss Saddam Hussein, he assured us.

3. (C) King Abdullah, while never directly addressing the first letter, expressed April 1 his support for the measures undertaken by the government during the "difficult circumstances" in the region. The King expressed "deep concern" over the rise in civilian casualties and called upon the government to make every effort to guarantee the protection of Iraqi civilians. Lastly, the King praised Jordanians for how "responsible" they have been during past demonstrations.

COMMENT

4. (C) The appearance of the second letter -- whether orchestrated by the Palace or not -- should reduce the sting of the first letter somewhat. The King's April 1 statement in support of the government's efforts seems designed to counter the idea that the government is not doing anything to act on the rage and sorrow felt by most Jordanians. We expect to see other such statements in the days ahead.
GNEHM